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House to probe JFK, King deaths

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The House concluded Friday that enough new questions have been raised since the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. to warrant a special committee to make new investigations.

It voted, 280-65, to establish a select committee to not only reopen the investigations of those two deaths but also "of any others the select committee shall determine." The panel would have to be recreated in January.

The new panel's first chairman, retiring Rep. Thomas N. Downing, D-Va., said recent revelations of CIA and FBI activities relating to the investigations of the deaths raised enough questions to justify new probes.

He cited the deaths of two Mafia figures recruited by the CIA to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro and possible ties to the Mafia and Cuba by Kennedy assassination figures which were unknown to the Warren Commission when it said Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin and that no conspiracy was involved.

Other allegations of a sloppy investigation and wrongdoing by the FBI into the Kennedy assassination, its harassment of King and the fact that King's assassin has been denied a new trial were cited as justification for the special panel.

Downing said, "I am convinced a conspiracy was involved" in the Kennedy death. The American people want and deserve to know the truth, he said.